

Message Text

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42

ACTION EUR-12

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O 161515Z APR 75 ZFG

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 744

DOD WASHDC IMMEDIATE

OSAF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OSLO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM IMMEDIATE

USCINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AFSC ANDREWS AFB

ASD WPAFB OH/YP

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 1068

E.O. 11652 NGDS

TAGS: MASS DA

SUBJECT: LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTER CONSORTIUM: DANISH REACTION
TO DUTCH LABOR PARTY CONGRESS

REF: A) THE HAGUE 1857 B) COPENHAGEN 1042

SUMMARY: THE OPPOSITION OF THE DUTCH LABOR PARTY
CONGRESS TO THE PURCHASE OF THE F-16 HAS DELAYED
TODAY'S SCHEDULED RECOMMENDATION BY THE DANISH
CABINET TO PARLIAMENT TO BUY THE AIRCRAFT. DEFENSE
MINISTER ORLA MOLLER ANNOUNCED HE WOULD AWAIT A
CLARIFICATION OF THE SITUATION IN THE NETHERLANDS.

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SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARLIAMENTARIANS ARE CAUCUSING TODAY

TO ASSESS THE INTERNAL REPERCUSSIONS OF THE POSITION
TAKEN BY THEIR SISTER PARTY IN THE NETHERLANDS AND TO
DRAW UP A NEW STRATEGY TO SEEK ULTIMATE PARLIAMENTARY
APPROVAL WITHOUT A PARTY SPLIT. WE HAVE URGED THE DANES
TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY INFORM THEMSELVES FULLY ON THE
PRESENT SITUATION IN THE NETHERLANDS AND HAVE POINTED
OUT THE FUTILITY OF THE DUTCH AND THE DANES WAITING EACH

OTHER OUT ON A PURCHASE COMMITMENT. FORTUNATELY THE
PRINCIPALS WHO WILL BE ORCHESTRATING THE NEXT MOVES
HERE ARE STAUNCH ADVOCATES OF THE F-16 AS WELL AS
PRACTICAL POLITICIANS. END SUMMARY

1) YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND THIS MORNING (APR 15) ALL
DANISH MEDIA CARRIED A STATEMENT BY DEFENSE MINISTER
MOLLER THAT THE DECISION BY THE DANISH CABINET ON THE
LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTER REPLACEMENT PURCHASE SCHEDULED FOR
APRIL 15 WOULD BE DELAYED. THIS DELAY ACCORDING TO
MOLLER HAS BEEN OCCASIONED BY RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT
THE RECENT CONGRESS OF THE DUTCH LABOR PARTY (REF A)
WHICH INTER ALIA OPPOSED THE PURCHASE OF THE F-16
MUCH OF THE MEDIA PLAY IMPLIES THAT THE DUTCH LABOR
PARTY DECISION IS TANTAMOUNT TO ONE TAKEN BY THE DUTCH
GOVERNMENT INSELF.

2) POLCOUNS HAS LEARNED THE FOLLOWING IN CONTACTS
WITH FOLKETING DEFENSE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN (LIBERAL)
ARNE CHRISTIANSEN: SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE
DOUBLE FOUR COMMITTEE AND MEMBER OF THE DEFENSE
COMMITTEE, POUL SOGAARD, AND NIELWS HAAGERUP, FOREIGN
AFFAIRS DEFENSE SPECIALIST FOR BERLINGSKE TIDENDE. UNTIL
NEWS OF THE DUTCH LABOR PARTY CONGRESS REACHED COPENHAGEN
OVER THE WEEKEND. THE DANISH PROPONENTS OF THE F-16
WERE OPTIMISTIC THAT THE SCENARIO OUTLINED IN REF B
WOULD BE SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT. IN FACT CHRISTIANSEN
SAID HE HAD EXPECTED THAT THE ANTICIPATED EARLY
PARLIAMENTARY DECISION IN FAVOR OF THE F-16 FOLLOWING
THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT'S PRONOUNCEMENT IN THE AIR
CRAFT'S BEHALF WOULD BE WEIGHTY ENOUGH TO OVERCOME ANY
UNCERTAINTY IN THE NETHERLANDS AND THAT WITH THE THREE
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COUNTRIES ON BOARD, THE BELGIANS COULD DO NOTHING ELSE
BUT FOLLOW SUIT.

3) WITH THE DUTCH LABOR PARTY NOW ON RECORD
AGAINST AN F-16 PURCHASE MOLLER FACES A NEW SITUATION
VIS-A-VIS HIS OWN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY. CERTAIN
ELEMENTS ON THE LEFT WING OF THE PARTY HAVE REMAINED
OPPOSED TO (1) THE PURCHASE OF ANY REPEAT ANY AIRCRAFT

AT THIS TIME TO REPLACE DENMARK'S F-100'S AND (2) THE CHOICE OF AN AMERICAN AIRCRAFT IN PARTICULAR. THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, HOWEVER WAS CONFIDENT THAT THESE VOICES OF OPPOSITION COULD BE STILLED AND THAT AT THE MOST THE PARTY WOULD SUFFER THE DEFECTION ON THIS ISSUE OF ONLY A HANDFUL OF ITS PARLIAMENTARIANS. SOGAARD SAID THAT THAT THE PARTY PARLIAMENTARIANS CAUCUS WILL BE DISCUSSING THIS WHOLE MATTER TODAY IN ORDER TO ASSESS THE DAMAGE DONE BY THE DUTCH LABOR CONGRESS PARTY AND TO ATTEMPT TO SET OUT A NEW TIMETABLE.

4) POLCOUNS SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE LABOR PARTY RESOLUTION AND AN ULTIMATE DECISION BY THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN OVERDRAWN IN DANISH PRESS ACCOUNTS AND URGED THE DANISH PARLIAMENTARIANS TO BE SURE THAT THEY HAD AN ACCURATE READING OF THE SITUATION IN THE NETHERLANDS, PERHAPS FROM THE DANISH EMBASSY THERE. (COMMENT: MOLLER AND OTHER DANISH PROONENTS OF THE F-16 WILL BE MEASURABLY ASSISTED TO THE EXTENT THAT THIS LINKAGE CAN BE SHOWN TO BE ATTENUATED.)

5) HAAGERUP WHO HAS EXCELLENT POLITICAL CONTACTS BELIEVES THAT IT IS NOW UNLIKELY THAT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WILL BE IN A POSITION TO RECOMMEND THE F16 TO PARLIAMENT INTIME TO ALLOW A DANISH COMMITMENT BEFORE MAY 15. SOGAARD ON THE OTHER HAND SAID IT WAS POINTLESS TO SPECULATE ON ANY NEW TIMETABLE UNTIL THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS PARTY'S INTERNAL ASSESSMENT HAD BEEN COMPLETED.

6) COMMENT: BY NATURE THE DANES ARE RELUCTANT TO GET CONFIDENTIAL

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OUT IN FRONT ON ANY ISSUE PARTICULARLY ONE LIKE THIS WHERE THEIR ROLE IS THE SMALLEST OF THE FOUR CONSORTIUM COUNTRIES. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ARE ALSO DEMONSTRABLY SENSITIVE TO POSITIONS TAKEN BY THEIR EUROPEAN SISTER PARTIES. FOR OUR PART WE ARE IN ADDITION TO URGING THE DANES TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE AN ACCURATE READING OF THE SITUATION IN THE NETHERLANDS, ALSO POINTING OUT THE FUTILITY OF REACHING A SITUATION WHERE THE DANES AWAIT A DECISION BY THE DUTCH WHILE AT THE SAME TIME THE DUTCH AWAIT ACTION BY THE DANES.

7) OUR CONTACTS ARE ALL HOPEFUL THAT MOLLER'S DELAY IS ONLY TEMPORARY AND THAT THE DANES WILL SUCCESSFULLY PERSIST IN THEIR ORIGINAL INTENTION TO BUY THE F16. TO THE EXTENT THAT INDIVIDUAL DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

ARE INFLUENCED BY THE QUESTIONS DISCUSSED AT THE DUTCH
LABOR PARTY CONGRESS PRESUMABLY THE ARGUMENTS CITED
THERE (EG DESIRE FOR CHEAP, LIMITED CAPACITY AIRCRAFT)
WHICH MILITATED AGAINST THE F-16 PURCHASE WOULD ALSO BE APPLIED
TO THE MIRAGE AND THE VIGGEN. BOTH THE SWEDISH AND
FRENCH EMBASSIES HRE, HOWEVER HAVE BEEN REPORTEDLY
"REACTIVATED" BY THE NEWS FRM THE NETHERLANDS.
FORTUNATELY FOR US INTERESTS THREE OF THE PRINCIPALS
WHO WILL ORCHESTRATE THE NEXT DANISH MOVES(MOLLER
CHRISTIANSEN AND SOGAARD) ARE NOT ONLY PRO-AMERICAN
AND
ADVOCATES OF THE F-16 BUT ALSO CAPABLE PRACTICAL
POLITICIANS.
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